

Tennessee Coalition for

**Truth in  
Classrooms**



# Know Your Rights:

**What You Need to Know About Tennessee's Censorship Bills  
from the 2023 Legislative Session**

**June 7th, 2023 | 4:00 - 5:00 pm CT**



The Education Trust

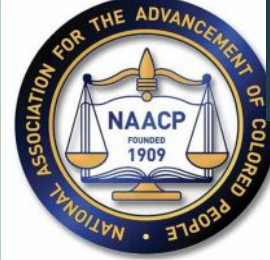
# Who Are We?

Tennessee Coalition for

**Truth in  
Classrooms**



# Who Are We?



ONE WILLCO



CHATTANOOGA  
Moms  
for  
Social  
Justice™



*Empowering Communities.  
Changing Lives.*



**AWAKE**  
EDUCATE ADVOCATE CHANGE



# Goals



- Provide a **comprehensive breakdown of the impact and legal implications** of the censorship legislation passed through the TN General Assembly in 2023
- Share **know-your-rights information** for students, educators, librarians, and community members
- Connect Tennessee censorship challenges to the **national & global censorship movement** trends
- Promote **awareness how to take action**, connect with Coalition partners, navigate resources, stay engaged in education advocacy,

# Agenda

- History of Tennessee Censorship Movement
- Bill Breakdown: ACLU TN - Know Your Rights
- Q&A
- National Advocacy: PEN America
- Survey & Opportunity to Share Testimony
- Resources
- Next Action Steps



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# A Brief History of Tennessee's Censorship Movement



The Education Trust



# How Did We Get Here?



- **National background to the “anti-CRT” movement**
  - See Education Week’s timeline in the resource document!
- **History of Tennessee Censorship Movement**
  - Among earliest filed, passed & signed anti-truth laws in the country in 2021
  - Public Chapter 493: “divisive concepts” law
  - TN Department of Education rules included:
    - Teacher disciplinary action
    - Threat to withhold millions of dollars from districts
- **CRT is being portrayed in the media in the following ways:**
  - Book Bans
  - Parents Rights
  - Attacks on Social Emotional Learning
  - Attacks on Diversity, Equity Inclusion Initiatives
  - Attacks on LGBTQ+ Rights
  - Attacks on African American Studies (e.g. College Board)

# How Did We Get Here?



- **Creation of the TN Coalition for Truth in Our Classrooms**
  - Resource Hub
- **Legislative Session Advocacy**
  - Email Campaign & Toolkit
  - Legislator Meetings
  - Committee Input
  - Digital Social Media Ads
  - Student Public Testimony



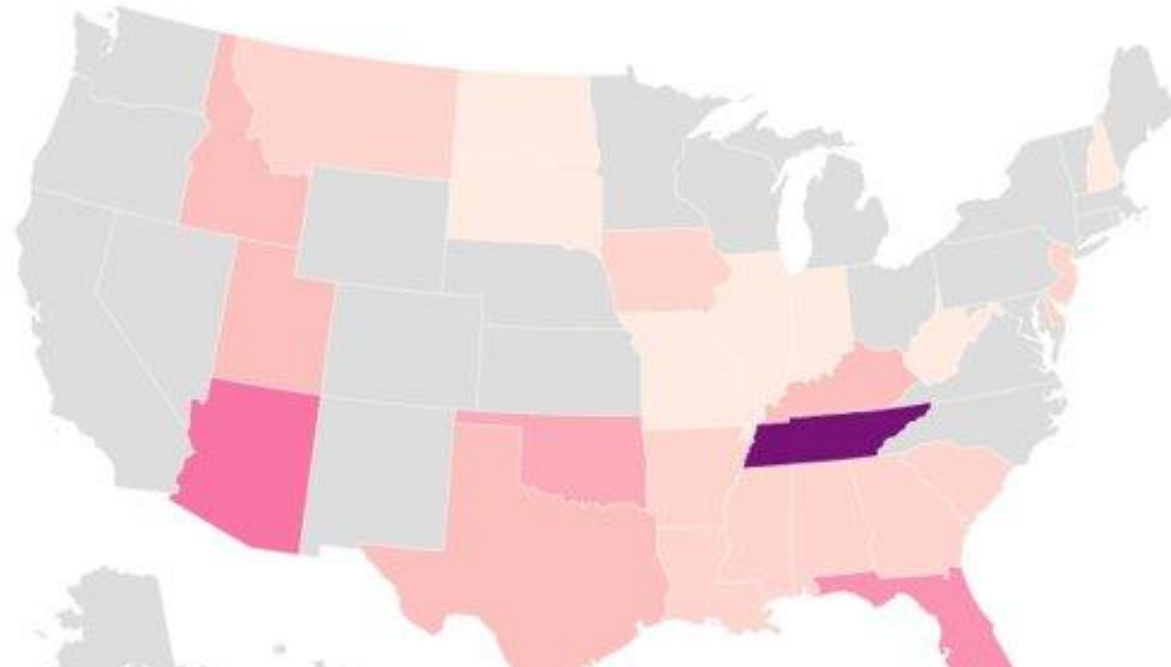


# Where Are We Today?



## Number of laws passed affecting the education culture wars

Over the past three academic years, 25 states have passed 64 laws reshaping what students can learn and do at school.



Because some of the state laws fall into multiple categories — for example targeting LGBTQ education and parental rights at the same time — the number of laws listed in each category for every state will not always add up to that state's total number of laws passed.

# Tennessee Censorship Legislation



## 2021

- **Public Chapter 493:** Prohibited Concepts

## 2022

- **Public Chapter 744:** Age-Appropriate Materials Act
  - Amended by 2023 Law **PC472**
- **Public Chapter 1137:** Textbook Commission; Statewide Book Bans
- **Public Chapter 818:** Higher Education "Divisive Concepts" Restrictions

## *What were our wins?*

- **Public Chapter 127 & 1063:** Requiring the Teaching of the Civil Rights Movement in 9-12 Social Studies
- **Public Chapter 938:** Requiring the Teaching of Black History and Culture in Grades 5-8

# Updates on 2021 & 2022 Censorship Laws



1. **Win!** Prohibited Concepts 2.0 (HB1377/SB1141) failed
  - Would have expanded Public Chapter 493 to allow any citizen to submit violation claims
2. **Recent Williamson County parents rights lawsuit failed**
  - Judge: “does not even come close to CRT”
3. **HB1040/SB1078 passed full Senate & failed House K-12 Subcommittee**
  - Would’ve amended the Age Appropriate Materials Act to remove requirement for teachers to post book lists online
4. **Official guidance for Public Chapter 1137 on ‘age appropriateness’ and Library Guidance by Tennessee’s Textbook Guidance was approved in March**

*Want to learn more on the content & legal implications of 2021 & 2022 laws?*

**Check out our past May & November Know Your Rights PowerPoint & Recording!**

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# Bill Breakdown: Know Your Rights

Stella Yarbrough, ACLU-TN



The Education Trust

**ACLU  
TN**



# Stella Yarbrough



Legal Director  
**ACLU of Tennessee**



# Implicit Bias Training Restrictions Public Chapter 438



- Prohibits both K-12 (T.C.A. 49-5-5801) and public higher education institutions (TCA 49-7-183) from requiring an educator or employee to participate or complete **“implicit bias training”** or from taking adverse employment action against educators and employees for failure or refusal to take part in **“implicit bias training.”**
- Also prohibits the state board of education and department of education from requiring an educator to complete “implicit bias training” as a requirement for educator licensure, professional development, program participation, or otherwise.
- **“Implicit Bias Training”**
  - Means a training or other educational program designed to expose an individual to biases that the training's or educational program's developer or designer presumes the individual to unconsciously, subconsciously, or unintentionally possess that predispose the individual to be unfairly prejudiced in favor of or against a thing, person, or group to adjust the individual's patterns of thinking in order to eliminate the individual's unconscious bias or prejudice.

# Implicit Bias Training Restrictions Public Chapter 438



- Could impede efforts to increase awareness of implicit racial bias and could greatly restrict conversation around race and racism in schools—as well as other biases.
- Removes a useful tool in Title VI compliance plans, often used by TDOE and USDOE.
  - USDOE is not constrained by this state law.
- Key takeaway: **Not an outright ban!**

# Student Pronoun Restrictions Public Chapter 448



- The law states that “A teacher or other employee of a public school or LEA is not:
  - (1) Required to use a student's preferred pronoun when referring to the student if the preferred pronoun is not consistent with the student's biological sex;
  - (2) Civilly liable for using a pronoun that is consistent with the biological sex of the student to whom the teacher or employee is referring, even if the pronoun is not the student's preferred pronoun; and
  - (3) Subject to an adverse employment action for not using a student's preferred pronoun, if the student's preferred pronoun is inconsistent with the student's biological sex.”

# Student Pronoun Restrictions Public Chapter 448



- One of the most concerning laws that was passed this last session.
  - Other states have passed or recently passed similar legislation, including Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Montana, North Dakota, and Utah.
- Tennessee’s law makes a very broad findings:
  - “Teachers and employees of public schools and LEAs do not shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression while at work”
  - “The use of pronouns by teachers and employees of public schools and LEAs in an educational setting is a matter of free speech or expression.”
- *Meriwether v. Hartop*
  - Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals (Tennessee is in the Sixth Circuit), found that a university professor who taught religion could argue in a lower court that he had a First Amendment right not to use a student’s correct pronouns.

# Student Pronoun Restrictions Public Chapter 448



- “Biological Sex”
  - Part of new law (TCA 1-3-105) that uses anti-trans definition of sex throughout entire Tennessee Code
  - "sex" means a person's immutable biological sex as determined by anatomy and genetics existing at the time of birth and evidence of a person's biological sex.
  - "evidence of a person's biological sex" includes, but is not limited to, a government-issued identification document that accurately reflects a person's sex listed on the person's original birth certificate.
- Erases trans, non-binary and intersex individuals from definition



# Student Pronoun Restrictions Public Chapter 448



- **This does not ban or stop a teacher from using a student's preferred pronoun.**
  - You are allowed to do so if a student asks you to.
- It also does not stop teachers from using the student's preferred name in class—so, you can call them the name they'd like to be called, just like you would with any other student who uses a nickname (e.g.).
- Potentially conflicts with federal law, particularly Title IX which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex.
  - The intentional misnaming and use of incorrect pronouns has been interpreted by USDOE as sex discrimination under Title IX.
  - Tennessee LEAs could find themselves out of compliance with federal law, even if teachers are protected from liability under state law.

# Parent Consent & Opt-In Public Chapter 353



- New law makes a few changes regarding parental consent found in Title 49.
  - When an LEA is going to offer “**gender identity curriculum**” or “**sexual orientation curriculum**” as part of its Family Life curriculum, it must now obtain parental consent. The previous version of the law allowed parents to opt-out but now they must opt-in. (TCA 49-6-1308.)
  - **School clubs and organizations.** Now, students must receive written parental consent to join a club. Before, parent had to provide written notice to the school that the student could not participate in a club. (TCA 49-6-1031.)
- → Could jeopardize access to information and peer support for LGBTQ+ kids

# TN Higher Ed Freedom & Expression Act Public Chapter 268



- Modifies existing law that was passed in 2022
  - That law, like the K-12 “Divisive Concepts” law, bans the teaching of certain “concepts” that center around topics like race and racial equity.
- Most of the changes enhance the **enforcement mechanisms** of the law.
  - Requires more investigation of violations by the institutions themselves and reporting of violations to the State Comptroller’s Office.
  - Also requires universities to post information about the banned concepts on the “institution's website and on introductory materials provided by the institution to new students and employees.”
  - Institutions have to provide mandatory training to their employees about this law.
  - → overall the changes could contribute to atmosphere of suppressed speech

# TN Higher Ed Freedom & Expression Act Public Chapter 268



- Concerningly, in a section that adds guidance on allowing student groups to use school property, the law adds:
  - (3) Notwithstanding subdivision (c)(1), a public institution of higher education may restrict or deny use of the institution's property for public displays, organized public gatherings, or public demonstrations if the display, gathering, or demonstration would violate § 39–17–902 or § 49–7–2405.
    - “It is unlawful to direct, present or produce any obscene theatrical production, peep show or live performance, and every person who participates in that part of the production which renders the production or performance obscene is guilty of the offense.” Tenn. Code Ann. § 39-17-902 (West)
  - → may further empower public universities to limit drag performances on campus



# Textbook Seller/Distributor Threats: “Education Obscenity” Public Chapter 278



- Expands on the existing criminal law that prohibits the distribution of obscene materials and adds that “It is unlawful for a book publisher, distributor, or seller to knowingly sell or distribute obscene matter to a public school serving any of the grades kindergarten through twelve (K-12).”
  - There is an exception in the existing law for material if “the obscene material is possessed by a person having scientific, educational, governmental or other similar justification” but this exception **does not apply** if the person is intending to distribute the material to minors.
- “Obscene” means:
  - (A) The average person applying contemporary community standards would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest;
  - (B) The average person applying contemporary community standards would find that the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct; and
  - (C) The work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value;



# Sports Participation Regulations Public Chapter 285



- Bill connects to laws passed previous sessions including:
  - 1) [Public Chapter 40](#) that requires a students' gender for purposes of public middle (5-8) or high school (9-12) in athletic activity be determined by students' sex at time of birth and
  - 2) [Public Chapter 909](#) that added enforcement mechanisms to Public Chapter 40 allowing the Commission of Education to withhold funds from LEAs who did not comply with the law
- Expands existing ban on trans student athletes from participating on sports team that aligns with their gender identity to even private schools that are members of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA).
- ACLU-TN is currently challenging Public Chapter 40 in *L.E. v. Lee*, arguing that the law discriminates against trans kids and violates Title IX and the Equal Protection Clause.

# Library Complaints Processes; Amendment to Age Appropriate Materials Act Public Chapter 472



- Age Appropriate Materials Act was passed at the very end of the legislative session in 2022.
  - It creates a process by which students, parents and LEA employees can complain that materials in a library collection are not “age appropriate.”
  - The law does not define “age appropriate” but instructs the Statewide Textbook Commission to issue guidance.
  - The Textbook Commission issued this guidance in March 2023.
- This latest law makes some changes to the process by which challenged materials are reviewed by the LEA and school board.
  - Previously, the local board of education was to have a process to “receive and evaluate feedback from a student, a student's parent or guardian, or a school employee regarding one (1) or more of the materials in the library collection of the student's or employee's school.” Now, ***the LEA or public charter school*** must have this process.

# Library Complaints Processes; Amendment to Age Appropriate Materials Act Public Chapter 472



- ~~If the local board of education or public charter school governing body~~ If the LEA or public charter school, including the local board of education or public charter school governing body, determines that material contained in the school's library collection is not appropriate for the age and maturity levels of the students who may access the materials, or is not suitable for, or consistent with, the educational mission of the school, then the school shall remove the material from the library collection.
  - Unclear how this review process would work.
- Another change makes it clear that the local school board would not be reviewing the challenged material unless and until the LEA itself does not reach a resolution.
  - Timing and process are not clear.
  - Textbook Commission guidance is now out of order.



**Submit questions in the Q&A feature**

Tennessee Coalition for

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# ACLU - TN

## Know Your Rights Resources



The Education Trust



# Know Your Rights Resource: FAQ Censorship in Tennessee's Schools (2021 & 2022 Laws)



**ACLU**

Tennessee

November 2022

This document does not give legal advice, and you should not rely on it as legal advice. You should speak with a lawyer to get advice on your specific situation.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Censorship in Tennessee's Schools

A nationwide attempt to censor honest discussion of America's history is underway. State legislatures – including Tennessee's – have passed legislation that censors teachers or employees of LEAs.

We oppose Tennessee's oppressive and vague policies, which threaten free speech in the classroom.

### State Library Censorship Law

The State Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commissions is composed of 14 members who recommend an official list of textbooks and instructional materials to be approved by the State Board of Education.

#### What does the State Library Censorship Law do?

In 2022, the state legislature made changes to the law that regulates the Tennessee State Textbook Commission. This law makes changes to the Commission by adding the appointment of a librarian or retired librarian, changing some of the position requirements, and changing the process so that now only the governor's appointees must be confirmed by the General Assembly.

### Age Appropriate Materials Act

#### What is the Age Appropriate Materials Act?

In 2022, the Tennessee legislature passed the "Age Appropriate Materials Act of 2022" (Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) 49-6-3801, et seq.). This law includes requirements for local boards of education to update library collection policies to include procedures for review of materials located in public school classrooms.

#### What does the Age Appropriate Materials act do?

### K-12 Classroom Censorship Law (Cont'd)

#### How will this law be enforced?

The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) issued rules as to how the law would be enforced.

- Only a parent, student, or LEA staff can file a complaint with an LEA.
- The complaint must be made within 30 days of the incident.
- The LEA will review the complaint and issue a written decision.
- If a violation is found, the LEA can take remedial action, including removing the material from the curriculum and even **disciplinary action** against the teacher.
- The LEA's decision can be appealed to the Tennessee Department of Education.
- If the TDOE determines that a violation has occurred, they will leave it to the LEA to pursue disciplinary action and will place the LEA into a corrective action plan.
- The LEA's funds are withheld until the terms of plan are met.

Educators should reach out to their unions (Tennessee Education Association) or a lawyer regarding any employment action taken against them.

#### Can schools still teach about Black American history, such as the Civil Rights movement?

### Concepts prohibited at LEAs & public charter schools

The law outlines a series of 14 "concepts" which may not be taught in Tennessee's schools, including the following:

- An individual, by virtue of the individual's race or sex, is inherently privileged, racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or subconsciously;
- A meritocracy is inherently racist or sexist, or designed by a particular race or sex to oppress members of another race or sex;
- This state or the United States is fundamentally or irredeemably racist or sexist;

The provisions of this law are so vague that they will likely ban or chill an even broader range of content from the curriculum.

For example, does this law bar teaching that some of America's Founding Fathers – indeed fundamental to American government and society – espoused racist views or owned slaves? Surely our Founding Fathers were "fundamental" to the American story. Another section of the bill requires "impartial" instruction on histories of racial oppression. What is meant by "impartial?" Should teachers avoid offering moral judgments on the practice of slavery? Or the deprivation of the voting rights of

**ACLU**  
TN



# Know Your Rights Resource: FAQ - Censorship in Tennessee's Public Institutions of Higher Education



**ACLU**

Tennessee  
June 2023

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Censorship in Tennessee's Higher Education

This document does not give legal advice, and you should not rely on it as legal advice. You should speak with a lawyer to get advice on your specific situation.

A nationwide attempt to censor honest discussion in America's public schools is underway and has begun impacting higher education. State legislatures – including Tennessee's – have passed legislation that censors students and employees of *public higher education institutions*. We oppose Tennessee's oppressive policies, which threaten free expression on campuses.

Read page 2 & 3 to learn what Public Chapter 818 & 268 do.

### What are “divisive concepts” as outlined in Public Chapter 818 & 268?

Both laws relate to a series of 16 “concepts” (TCA 49-7-1902) which may not be used in Tennessee's public higher education settings, including the following:

- An individual, by virtue of the individual's race or sex, is inherently privileged, racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or subconsciously;
- A meritocracy is inherently racist or sexist, or designed by a particular race or sex to oppress members of another race or sex;
- This state or the United States is fundamentally or irredeemably racist or sexist;
- The rule of law does not exist, but instead is a series of power relationships and struggles among racial or other groups;

### Do Public Chapter 818 & 268 impact higher education courses and instruction?

No, unlike Tennessee's divisive concepts law in K-12, Public Chapter 818 and 268 do not explicitly impact courses or instruction in public institutions of higher education in Tennessee. As currently written, these laws affect other aspects of higher education settings, including training, hiring and admissions processes, and create additional institution reporting requirements.

### What resources are available to support institutions navigating higher education censorship efforts?

Check out [this academic freedom resource guide](#) for campus leaders by PEN America & American Council on Education.

**If any of these laws affect you, we want to hear from you.**

If you are aware of a school using these censorship

## Public Chapter 268

In 2023, the Tennessee legislature passed the “Tennessee Higher Education Freedom of Expression & Transparency Act.” This law expands the implications of **Public Chapter 818** by creating additional requirements and processes for public institutions of higher education related to divisive concepts.

### What does the law do?

- Public institutions of higher education may not compel students or employees to adopt “divisive concepts,” or condition hiring, tenure, promotion, or graduation on endorsement of a “specific ideology or political viewpoint.”
  - Failure to endorse “divisive concepts” cannot be used to penalize students or employees.
  - An individual who believes a violation has occurred “may pursue all equitable or legal remedies that may be available to the individual” in an appropriate court.

## Public Chapter 818

In 2022, the Tennessee legislature passed **Public Chapter 818**. This law bans the same “divisive concepts” from **Public Chapter 493** except in public higher education settings as opposed to [Tennessee's K-12 classrooms](#), and includes two additional concepts: “stereotyping” (assigning character traits or values based on race or sex) and “scapegoating” (assigning fault, blame or bias based on race or sex).

### What does the law do?

- Outlines a process for students or employees to report violations of **Public Chapter 818**.
  - A violation occurs when:
    - A student or employee received adverse treatment due to refusal to support one or more “divisive concepts.”
    - An institution required a student, job applicant, or candidate for





# Know Your Rights Resource: CRT FAQ & Youth Activism

## Youth and Students' Rights

Search ...



### MORE ON YOUTH & STUDENTS' RIGHTS

> [Students' Rights Resource Center](#)

> [Youth Activism Guide](#)

> [LGBT Youth Resource Center](#)

## **ACLU** FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: Tennessee **CRITICAL RACE THEORY**

A nationwide attempt to censor honest discussion of America's history is underway. State legislatures – including Tennessee's – have passed legislation purporting to ban the teaching of critical race theory, or CRT.<sup>1</sup> But those who seek to prohibit CRT either do not understand this field of study or do not want to confront America's racist past.

We oppose Tennessee's oppressive and vague policy, which threatens free speech in the classroom. Moreover, the law threatens our understanding of the roles race, racism and legalized discrimination have played in American history.

Below are some FAQs regarding critical race theory.

### What is Critical Race Theory (CRT)?

Critical Race Theory is a theoretical framework that emerged from the legal academy in the 1970's.<sup>2</sup> It is a practice of studying how the social construct of race permeates and is institutionalized in the various structures of American society – e.g., the criminal justice system, public education system, housing and labor markets, healthcare system and other modes of cultural expression such as literature

### Is "critical race theory" being taught in Tennessee's K-12 classrooms?

Likely not. CRT is a highly specific and advanced field of study typically taught in advanced college courses, graduate schools, and law schools. This does not mean, however, that the topic of race is never discussed in Tennessee schools. Historical concepts like slavery, the civil

# ACLU-TN Legal Intake Form



If you are aware of a school using new laws to stop student speech, association, or other activity, contact ACLU-TN:

<https://action.aclu.org/legal-intake/aclu-tn-legal-intake-form>

Tennessee Coalition for

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# National Perspective: PEN America



The Education Trust

# Laura Schroeder



Senior Manager, Legislative Affairs  
**PEN America**



# PEN America



## 311 Writers in Prison Worldwide

Data from PEN America's Freedom to Write Index 2022





Tennessee Coalition for

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# Local Action, Resources & How to Stay Engaged



The Education Trust

# Next Actions



- **Take Event [Survey](#)**
  - Share anonymous testimony
- **[Sign up](#) for weekly legislative updates**
  - Includes our bill tracker
- **[ACLU- TN Intake Form](#)**
  - If you are aware of a school using new laws to stop student speech, association, or other activity, contact ACLU-TN
- **TN Coalition for Truth in Our Classrooms**
  - Review & share ACLU-TN Know Your Rights [resource hub](#)
  - Sign up for Coalition listserv

***Is your organization, or do you know an organization, interested in getting involved with our Coalition? Contact: [mpowell@edtrust.org](mailto:mpowell@edtrust.org)***



# Next Actions: ETSU & Vanderbilt Research Study Opportunity



JOIN OUR RESEARCH  
STUDY

## TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY

We are looking for practicing K-12 teachers (including librarians, ESL teachers, etc.) in Tennessee willing to participate in a 1 time 30-60 minute zoom interview. The first 20 interviewees will receive a \$100 electronic gift card.



You will be presented with information related to recently enacted policy in TN and asked to share your thoughts in an interview format.

Your name and names of your school and district will be not be used and your answers will be confidential.

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

**Dr. Renee Moran**  
[ricemoran@etsu.edu](mailto:ricemoran@etsu.edu)

**Dr. Natalia Ward**  
[wardna1@etsu.edu](mailto:wardna1@etsu.edu)

# Coalition Partner Engagement & Resources



- **Follow our Coalition partners & sign up for their newsletters**
  - See websites & social media in the resource links document!
- **Action Opportunities:**
  - **EmpowerED Student Network:** A Legislative Review & Interactive Forum for Youth & Adult Allies: June 13th, 4 - 5:30 CT
  - **Stand for Children Tennessee** Monthly Momentum Memphis Education Task Forces
    - Next meeting: Monday, June 12th, 6PM CT
  - **Mom's for Social Justice - Chattanooga** Monthly Community Virtual Meetings
    - Next Meeting: Thursday, June 8th, 6 PM CT
  - **TN Educator of Color Alliance** Membership Network - free to join!
  - **TN Association of School Librarians** - Reach out to TASL if you or you know a librarian who faces censorship in their districts.
  - **AWAKE TN - Youth Advocacy Summit:** August 12th 9-4:30 CT

# Survey - Share Your Testimony!



[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CTCWeb\\_Jun2023](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CTCWeb_Jun2023)

# Resource Hub

Tennessee Coalition for

## Truth in Classrooms



A Resource Guide for Students, Educators,  
and Community Advocates

<https://edtrust.org/tennessee/tn-coalition-for-truth-in-our-classrooms/>

# Coalition Resource Hub



## Action Toolkits

Download a toolkit from **Learn from History** and **Our Turn** that's right for you to help ensure that your schools continue teaching fact-based history.

### LEARN FROM HISTORY

- Overview & Communication Guide
- Parents
- School Board Members

- School System Leaders
- Teachers

### OUR TURN

- Truth(Ed) Toolkit

### RACE FORWARD

- Equity Policies Toolkit for School Boards



## Messaging Guides

Review evidence-informed guides on how to frame your advocacy language on common concerns, questions, and topics you might encounter in current education debates.

### CHANGING THE NARRATIVE

- Social Toolkit
- Family & Friends Messaging
- Glossary
- Hot Topic Talking Points
- Core Messages
- Toolkit for Local Advocates: Teaching Diverse & Inclusive Materials & Defending DEI

*Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (LCCRUL)*

- Legal Talking Points

*40 Race Forward*

- Counter-Narrating the Attacks on Critical Race Theory

*Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA)*

- Knowledge is Power



# Coalition Resource Hub



## Anti-Truth, Censorship Bill Movement

Learn about how to take action on current bills moving through the Tennessee General Assembly, and track the equity implications for bills moving across the country.

### TENNESSEE ADVOCACY

TN Youth Coalition Testimony in Opposition to SB1944/HB1944

#### Current Law:

Public Chapter 744: The Age Appropriate Materials Act & TDOE Memorandum

Public Chapter 493: K-12 Classroom Censorship & TDOE Rules

Public Chapter 818: Higher Education Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Restrictions

Public Chapter 1137: State Library Censorship

### ACROSS THE COUNTRY

American Library Association: 2022 Censorship By The Numbers

Every Library: Legislation of Concern

Education Week: Map – Where CRT is Under Attack

MAP Advancement Project: LGBTQ Curricular Laws

UCLA CRT Forward Tracking Project

African American Policy Forum: #TruthBeTold Campaign



## Know Your Rights

Review helpful resources consolidated by the ACLU.

### EDUCATOR & STUDENT RESOURCE

ACLU-TN FAQ: Censorship in Tennessee's Schools

ACLU-TN Youth & Students' Rights Resources

ACLU Right to Learn Toolkit: Your Guide to Combatting Classroom Censorship

ACLU-TN FAQ: Critical Race Theory

# Coalition Resource Hub



## Censorship in the News

Review recent media highlights on anti-truth, censorship issues in Tennessee and across the country.

### RESEARCH, PODCASTS & PUBLICATIONS

- The Education Trust: This Preschool Handbook is Essential to Early Learning — So Why Do Some States Want to Ban It?
- The Education Trust: Censorship is About Power, Not about People
- National Center for Youth Law Report: The Student-Affirming Education Needed for Our Children and our Nation's Future
- The Daily: The Sunday Read – ‘Daring to Speak About Race in a Divided School District’
- Education Trust: Teaching Honest History
- Education Trust Podcast: Ed Trusted
- Education Trust: Anti-CRT Laws Ban Them: Now What?
- Stand for Children Teacher’s Report Survey

### TENNESSEE

- The Washington Post: A Tennessee Teacher Planned a Mother’s Day Class. Then came the MAGA rage.
- WBIR: KCS passes agreement with East Tennessee Freedom Schools for free summer student programming
- Tennessean: House approves bill targeting publishers for sending schools explicit books
- Chalkbeat Tennessee: Tennessee school employees could skip implicit-bias training under bill headed to the governor’s desk

### ACROSS THE COUNTRY

- Chalkbeat: National history scores continue to fall, while civic scores drop for first time
- Politico: Illinois set to become first state to end book bans
- The Center Square: Texas Senate passes bill that would ban higher education institutions from implementing DEI policies
- The Hechinger Report: The culture wars are driving teachers from the classroom. Two campaigns are trying to help.
- Pen America: Education Censorship Continues – the 2023 Legislative Sessions So Far
- NPR: Library funding becomes ‘the nuclear option’ as battle over books escalate
- Politico: Florida lawmakers restrict pronouns and tackle book objections in sweeping education bill
- Inside Higher Education: Tennessee Again Targets “Divisive Concepts”
- The 74: As Book Banning Becomes More Popular, Experts Say Some Libraries Will Just Close
- The74: National Study Reveals 1 in 4 Teachers Altering Lesson Plans Due to Anti-Critical Race Theory Laws



# Coalition Resource Hub



## Events

Register now for virtual opportunities to learn more and take action.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

6/7: Know Your Rights: What You Need to Know About Tennessee's Censorship Bills from the 2023 Legislative Session

📅 3/21, 4/18, 5/16, 5/30, 6/20: Teach Out Webinar Series – Voices for Honest Education Fellows

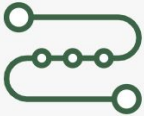
📅 Thursdays, 11-12 CT: Stand for Children Intelligence Briefing

### PAST EVENTS

📅 11/02 Recording: [Know Your Rights: Updates on What You Need to Know About Tennessee's K-12 Censorship Bills](#)

📅 11/02 PowerPoint Slides: Know Your Rights: Updates on What You Need to Know About Tennessee's K-12 Censorship Bills

📅 5/24: The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights – Teaching Truth: Messaging the Moment



## Timeline



### February, 2021

**ACTION** – **HB0580 / SB0623**, TN first anti-truth prohibited concepts law, filed

- RESPONSE** – May 4, 2021: **Letter** sent to Tennessee General Assembly, Opposing HB580
- RESPONSE** – May 12, 2021: TN Educators of Color Alliance Urges Gov. Lee to Veto HB580/SB623 in **Letter** Signed by Over 350 Teachers, parents, and Education Leaders



### June, 2021

# Survey - Share Your Testimony!



[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CTCWeb\\_Jun2023](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CTCWeb_Jun2023)

Tennessee Coalition for  
**Truth in  
Classrooms**



**Thank You!**

Meili Powell - [mpowell@edtrust.org](mailto:mpowell@edtrust.org)